

anarchist fortnightly

Freedom

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Inside:

25p

INTERNATIONAL ANARCHIST CONSPIRACY

AS SCARMAN'S INQUIRY into the Brixton riot begins there are moves to lay blame.

Over a weekend in April the population of Brixton took to the streets to confront the police. There had been a long build up of tension, aggravated by 'saturation policing', the use of 'sus' laws, blatant bias. Spontaneous anger is not comprehensible to hack journalists and authoritarian personalities. Unable to make a move themselves unless it fits an acceptable pattern, there must be an organiser, an instigator. It wasn't long before the reports appeared about left wing agitation. Have these people ever asked a Brixton black about their attitude to white leftists? Have they ever met a Brixton black? Soon it became even better. Anarchists. The weekend was triggered off by white anarchists.

As the Scarman inquiry begins in the town hall, this satisfying scenario is being milked for all it is worth. For a really convincing anarchist conspiracy you need a few ingredients. You need some anarchists. There's a bookshop in Railton Road. You need some explosives (remember the weedkiller and sugar?) Well, there were plenty of petrol bombs during the riot. They'll do. You need an 'international' link. That's OK. You only have to claim it.

(Current score: 7300 police used, 415 injured, 118 vehicles damaged. 127 civilians injured, about 700 arrests, including 200 charges of assault, 200 of criminal damage and 100 of burglary).

In the last couple of days about 20 more people have been arrested. The arrests are based on some 3000 photographs taken over the weekend. These include street level snaps and helicopter filming, using the most modern devices. (This enterprise was presumably helped by the 'alternative' publications which printed pictures without the elementary precaution of blanking out faces). People have been confronted with these photos in attempts at getting confessions. We are advised that the photos in themselves are not sufficient evidence. They would also require the testimony of the photographer.

Those arrested have been subjected to the usual pressures - no access to lawyers, telephones etc.

Predictably there have been raids - the usual type of thing; 6.30 in the morning the door smashed in with pickaxes; Prevention of Terrorism Act warrants waved about;

every scrap of usable 'political' literature seized, address books included.

Two weeks ago (31 May) the *Sunday Express* carried a story across five columns about a 'mad anarchist'. This apparently is the person who has been sending letter bombs to several public figures. The 20 column inches did not carry a single fact. 'Probably', 'maybe', 'officers believe', 'it is assumed', and so on. It is not known if his 'obsessive hatred of the monarchy' had anything to do with the blank shots at the Trooping of the Colour.

Now the newspaper continues its anarchist coverage. This week (14 June) it alleges 'Terror Plan Behind the Brixton Riot'. It drags in everything - anarchists, members of the Red Brigades living in the Brixton area, mass assaults on Brixton police station, guns.

All this sounds depressingly familiar. Would readers please consult back files of *FREEDOM*? Two years ago would do ('Persons Unknown') or three years ago ('PTA Turned on Anarchists'). There seems to be something about the spring that incites police forces. Meanwhile, defence measures are underway. A leaflet giving advice about what to do if arrested is being prepared.



Don't Choke, ALF!

I don't suppose there are any readers of FREEDOM who would admit to being in favour of cruelty to animals, any more than they would advocate the torture of humans (other than the odd knee-capping, or in pursuit of information in the course of an armed struggle, perhaps....), but I wonder if there are others like me who feel a certain uneasiness in the appearance of another 'Animal Liberation Front' Special Review?

It is not that I feel it is a diversion—anarchism fights on all fronts as far as I am concerned and I have always advocated that groups with special interest should inform the rest of us of the fight they are putting up in their corner. But the rather 'Holier than thou' tone of many of the passages in the Review seemed to me counter-productive almost to the point of being offensive.

Rather like the graffiti that has sprouted in Angel Alley, for years Freedom Press territory, but now visitors could be forgiven for taking it to be an outpost of the ALF Empire. Putting your marker on territory is of course a common animal practice—cats and dogs piss on lavender bushes and lampposts, red robins sing their song and flash their red breasts—and woe betide any other sweet songster who dips his wing over the boundary. Red robins will come bob, bob, bobbin' along to peck out the eyes of any bold sparrow who fancies his chances.

I am a carnivore—worse, an omnivore (which means I eat anything)—so, in ALF's terms, I am a speciesist, and that, graffiti-wise, equals 'sanctified SS'. Well, as a mere man, I am now used to being told that I am a rapist and should be castrated, so, to be promoted to the SS before I bleed to death in Angel Alley is obviously no more than my just deserts.

Munching on a slug the other evening, it came to me in a flash of intuition (slugs can be better than magic mushrooms for some things) that our comrades of ALF have performed a neat piece of prestidigitation by boldly announcing their alliance with the animal kingdom while actually withdrawing from it. (The Bolsheviks have performed similar tricks in their time, but let that pass.)

By highlighting the worst excesses of the human system of capitalism in the exploitation of other animals,

animal husbandry, which has been a feature of human life for thousands of years, is now denounced as 'Speciesim' and all equated with factory farming. But why is factory farming so called? Because, surely, animals are now (rather late in the day you might think) being introduced to conditions which were laid upon humans, of a certain class, over 200 years ago.

I recently paid a visit, in course of my exploited labour, to a factory with an assembly line a quarter of a mile long—from one end you could hardly see the other, lost in haze and dust—which moved up from one work station to the next every two minutes. Grey-faced men and women sat on stools four feet apart, each performing their prescribed sequence of small actions. Some took 1 minute 55 seconds; others needed 1 minute 65 seconds. They were in trouble. That's why factory farming is so called—because some animals are now subjected to the same kind of economic organisation as human have been for centuries.

No longer can they stroll around on green pastures, laying eggs awkwardly under hedges, or fattening with flavour on God's good green grass.

Let me make myself clear. I am deeply opposed to factory farming because it is a cruel application to other species of a vicious exploitative system which I resent deeply for myself. But I am not opposed to the organic husbandry which has been the basis of human economy since homo sapiens gave up being a scavenger, a food gatherer and a hunter and found out how to till the soil to grow food for humans and cattle alike—theby extending control over the well-being of both.

Unhappily this establishment of agriculture brought with it the basis of conflict between the haves and the have-nots, those who had claimed land and those who had missed out on it, and, in fact the basis of power, privilege, property and war.

Yet that agriculture brought with it the only practical basis for vegetarianism. Confusing isn't it?

On so-called scientific experiments, there can be no sensible argument, because the views will be so subjective. We must agree, surely on the misuse of animals for cosmetic products—but there will be those who think that if

human children's lives are saved because meningitis, or small pox, or diphtheria have been licked through the use of animal experiments, or that cancer or spina bifida or leprosy can be beaten, then it is a subjective argument on the value of one animal's life against another.

But oddly enough, ALF don't argue as though they really think of humans as animals. 'Omnivores', they tell us 'assume with an arrogance worthy of the most loyal fascist, that human life takes precedence over all other life in matters of survival and self-determination.'

I've got news for ALF. Every animal, reptile, bird and insect thinks that's its own species takes precedence etc.... And many of them, ALF, are omnivores. The animal kingdom, if you'll forgive the word, does not divide itself neatly into the good herbivores and the bad carnivores—about which, incidentally, you have been more than coy in your review.

You end your passage on fox hunting by referring to the fox's 'normal prey'—and then skip on to deer hunting as though you had touched on a naughty thought.

Deer, of course, are herbivores, while foxes are carnivores, omnivores, even. They will capture alive and eat alive little bunny-rabbits and rodents of all kinds, small as well as big birds and bird's eggs, even. In towns they will scavenge in humans' dustbins and gobble worms with gusto. I'm bloody sure that your average Reynard thinks that fox life takes precedence over all other life!

In fact that is how it is throughout all nature. Yet you, dear ALF, want us humans to be different, you want us to opt out of the animal kingdom and just be sympathetic observers, like good Christians ought to be, looking after the weak and turning a blind eye to the goings-on of the strong. For you carefully omit all references to lions and tigers (not even as sources of skins) and naughty crocodiles, while you mention fish only in the context of human angling as a sport—yet fish live upon each other, according to their species (!) like no other class. Whales live on live krill; killer whales will take seals or dolphins, both of which will take penguins or fish; sharks will take whatever they can manage, and so on down the scale. All very natural.

In evading the issue of animal 'speciesim', dear ALF, you are

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REPORTS

Northants

ALF activists have claimed responsibility for the immobilisation and daubing with blood-red paint of 15 lorries at the premises of Faccenda Chickens at Brackley, Northants. The raid was carried out in protest at the barbaric system there of raising and slaughtering chickens. Damage to the lorries is estimated at £3,000.

Commander Milner of the RSPCA is quoted as saying 'I'm sure that if people knew what happens to these birds, they would never eat another chicken. It's put me off them for life.'

After 6 months of investigation, a test case against the company was thrown out of court because the summons had not been properly signed by the magistrate.

Meanwhile, the following acts and conditions prevail:

Birds are taken from transport boxes and hung by the legs on a metal shackle fixed to a moving cable. The bird is carried to a bath of electrified water designed to stun. This does not always work. Next, a rotating arm grasps the head and pulls the bird towards a revolving blade designed to cut an artery in the neck and kill through loss of blood. The blade often misses and cuts are made anywhere from the beak to the breast. About 26 million birds go through such plants every year. There is no way that the charges against this company would not have been upheld in court in less than three hours.

Tyne and Wear

THERE has been a remarkable resurgence of anarchist activity on Tyne and Wear with the formation of the 'Tyne and Wear Anarchist D.A.M.' group comprising anarchists from Gateshead, Newcastle and Sunderland.

Comrades attended and leafleted Newcastle and Sunderland T.U.C. May Day marches and demonstrations.

The four black and red anarchist banners were a prominent feature of the marches attracting much interest and attention.

An anarchist bookstall at the Sunderland demonstration sold a fair amount of literature.

Newcastle and Sunderland town centres have been flyposted. The regular production of 'Dutch Wall-paper' posters is being planned whilst anti-royal wedding posters are being 'distributed'.

An anti-monarchist leaflet is just off the press and a leaflet specifically for distribution at C.N.C.N.D. events is being drafted.

A public meeting is being held in Newcastle on 14th July 1981, when Dave Thomas, D.A.M. National Secretary, will speak on Anarcho-Syndicalism.

A heartening feature of the Group is the youth involvement. Members of the Gateshead punk band, 'Total Chaos', have associated themselves with the Group and are enthusiastic in the forefront of activity. These comrades produce their own paper, 'No Comment' and in co-operation with older members of the Group are publishing a leaflet explaining anarchism written to appeal to teenagers.

DARYL HEPPLE

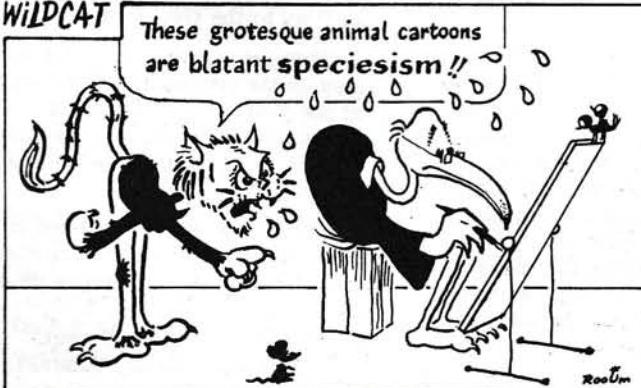
Swansea

SWA NSEA Anarchist Group, with a view to jumping on the Nationalist bandwagon, is urgently seeking any information, ancient tatty pamphlets, personal recollections, cuttings, photos, contributions, W.H.Y., as regards Anarchist heritage or evidence of the Anarchist tradition in Wales. So far they have only been able to unearth references by Albert Meltzer ('Anarchists in London'), John Quail (*The Slow Burning Fuse*) Emma Goldman (the miner that she married for citizenship), Leo Abse's autobiography, and *The Miner's Next Step*. Plus the usual text book stuff on the syndicalists, and academic accounts of the numerous violent clashes of turn of the century class-war. Poised over the local newspaper archives, they urgently need names, dates and specifics. In fact, anything. They're not aiming at a million-seller Penguin paperback, or at re-interpreting Welsh working-class history (to anyone left of Stalin, strong libertarian trends are self-evident), but at publishing a bi-lingual re-discovery of the power of autonomous/anarchist organisation. Optimistically, perhaps, they feel that such a venture now could turn the heads of those activists in Wales, who, realising the futility of looking to Moscow, Peking or London, are turning via Derry & Belfast to themselves, and each other, and, perhaps, the past. Any and all contributions/collaborations from early Celtic past right up to the present day, very welcome. Acknowledgements to flow like wine, and postage refunded.

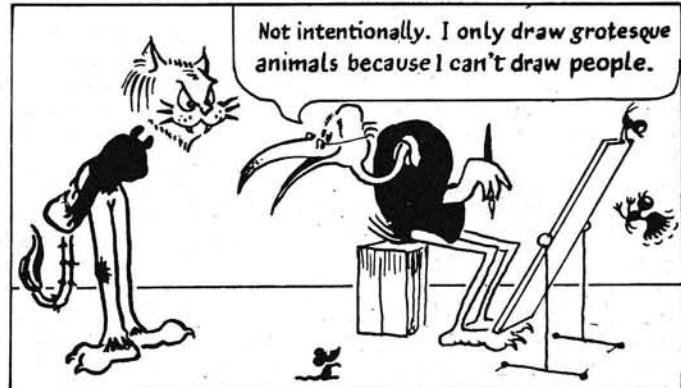
Contact: Welsh Anarchist History, c/o Tim, 14 Western Street, Swansea, SA1 3JY..

WILDCAT

These grotesque animal cartoons are blatant speciesism!!



Not intentionally. I only draw grotesque animals because I can't draw people.



GREECE PRISONERS IN REVOLT

The Athens Anarchosyndicalist Group writes -

COMRADE S. In Greece the repression of both political and so-called common law prisoners continues to deteriorate. The situation is so serious that a large number of these people can no longer bear the tortures, humiliations and maltreatment to which they are being subjected by the guards and are forced to commit suicide or attempt to do so. To give some concrete examples:-

This very day, 19 April 1981, Miltiades Alegianis, 44 years old, hanged himself in the psychiatric hospital of Corydalos prison in Piraeus. Yesterday, 18 April, G. Maroulakis hanged himself in his cell at Corydalos. Questioned by journalists on the cause of the repeated suicides the justice minister of the Greek 'Republic' said that "the suicide of prisoners is a normal phenomenon".

At the beginning of January Pol. Theophilides, fastened for five days to an iron bed, without blankets or mattress, in a damp room at below zero temperatures and continually tortured by two guards until he had a heart attack, died.

Two months later G. Xiraphis committed suicide in his cell after having been savagely tortured, while Jean Noulis tried to do the same thing.

During the following days a total of 10 prisoners tried to hang or fatally wound themselves by banging their heads violently against the wall, while N. Panopoulos committed suicide in public before 15 people in the psychiatric hospital of Corydalos.

On 15 April the prisoner S. Kolymiades, who had heart trouble, died at Corydalos because of the conditions of his imprisonment and the warders' maltreatment. He was urgently transferred to the psychiatric hospital of the prison but the only doctor there was absent, since he attends only one hour per day to tend the 220 patients, a large number of whom are fastened 24 hours at a time to their beds. The only nurse is an ignorant guard who did not know what to do, and the hospital director is also a guard without any medical knowledge.

All this has been taking place at

Corydalos, which is opposite the Acropolis of Athens. (The government paper *Apogeimmatini* has written about these suicides, even giving details of the methods of torture being used there - "Corydalos smells of death"). It is noteworthy that this prison is considered the most modern of all Greek prisons. One can imagine what goes on in the other medieval prisons.

Faced with this unbearable situation the prisoners are in daily revolt or go on collective, long-term hunger strikes (Kyritsis and Scandalis, for example, have recently gone on at least six hunger strikes, each lasting 53 days, the consequence being that their state of health has been definitively seriously damaged). These collective protests by the so-called political prisoners - anarchists and Marxists of the extreme left-play a catalysing role.

As a result of all these protests, on 13 March at 2 o'clock in the morning, some Corydalos guards ('Corydalos' means 'lark'), having received the order from the director of the prison, Krinis, and the chief brigadier Evtimou, forcibly dragged from their cells the political prisoners Philippou Kyritsis and Jean Scandalis. They beat them savagely - all the warders beating them at the same time - with sticks and with their boots all over their bodies - on their heads, stomachs, testicles etc. - dragging them over the ground and tearing them by their hair. After sustaining serious injuries to their stomachs, feet and fingers, the prisoners were put in hospital at Agios Pavlos (St Paul) where the doctor, Th. Megaloeconomou, gave them anti-tetanus injections. After this, to keep their mouths sealed, and to frighten them, they were sent for three days to the prison of Patras in the Peloponnese where they were beaten up again, and for one day to Corfu prison where the same thing happened yet again. Returned to Corydalos Philippou Kyritsis and Jean Scandalis lodged a complaint and began a new hunger strike with the anarchist prisoners Kyriakos Miras and Sophia Kyritsis, demanding an end to torture of prisoners and an improvement in their conditions.

At the end of March a meeting took place at the Gloria theatre in Athens, organised by the journal *Tys Phylakis* (Of prison). 3000 people took part in this meeting which lasted four hours. The speakers were mainly ex prisoners, denouncing their conditions of imprisonment, what they saw in the prisons, and so on.

At the beginning of April another meeting organised by the same journal was held in a public square in Athens. 4000 people attended it. A short time beforehand, a thousand of them demonstrated outside Corydalos prison, with the slogan "Prisoners out, police and judges in". They demanded the release of the people inside and an end to the torture and maltreatment. The prisoners, for their part, realising what was taking place, began a revolt. However, the 'democratic' government replied by sending in large numbers of tanks and riot police, and 'order' was restored. During the struggles which followed two demonstrators, Th. Mpasiakos and Spyridou Zervos, were seriously injured. A schoolboy, S.A. of Piraeus, was also shot by a bullet.

The demonstrators Chrissoula Proclou, a 19-year-old student, Th. Mpasiakos, 19, Alexander Chrissaphides, 16, D. Arbanites, 21, and Sp. Zervos, 19, were brought before the court and charged with acts of terrorism.

Comrades, we ask of you the following:-

- 1) That you give wide publicity, by every means available to you, to the problem of 'repression' in 'democratic' Greek society today;
- 2) That you appeal to people in your respective countries to visit not only the classic historic monuments of ancient Greece, but at the same time the monuments of the Greece of the European Economic Community - that is, the 40 prisons, slaughterhouses - and to demand to see the prisoners themselves.
- 3) That approaches be made to all humanitarian organisations, as well as to the Greek authorities;
- 4) That messages of solidarity be sent to the prisoners at the address of the journal *Tys Phylakis*: Katerina Istropoulou, 8 Navatrinou Street, Athens (tel: 36-29-870 and 36-000-75);
- 5) That we be kept informed of all your actions so that we can communicate them to the prisoners and the press.

(21 Democritou Street,
Metamorphosis, Athens).

AUSTRALIA

RIDE AGAINST URANIUM

THE fourth Bicycle Ride Against Uranium arrived in Canberra after 11 days and over 500 kilometres on May 19th. It was undertaken by 30 people from Sydney to again raise the issue of uranium mining and nuclear power among the Australian people. The ride was organized in support of Trade Union bans on the export of Uranium Yellowcake from Australia.

The Australian Council of Trade Unions more than a year ago adopted a policy against uranium mining pending a method of safe disposal of nuclear waste. This policy has proven a contentious issue among affiliated unions. The Australian Workers Union, who cover many uranium mining workers, are in favour of mining and export. While the Australian Railways Union especially, and the Seamen's Union and the Waterside Workers Federation to a lesser extent, are against the export of yellowcake. Union bans by the latter unions are just starting to be effective.

The purpose of the ride, to raise widespread support for these union bans, is slowly being fulfilled. Along the route the issues were raised, discussed, and argued with the local people. Much local publicity was generated and many people gave moral encouragement as well as donations.

The first ride was inaugurated in 1975 when the Anti-Uranium movement was in its infancy and a Federal Labor Government was in power. It grew till in 1977 there were well over 1000 cyclists converging on Canberra. In September 1977 thousands of people attempted to stop, by peaceful direct action, the export of a yellowcake shipment from White Bay in Sydney. This included people breaking onto the wharf, swimming to the wharf, and a canoeist attempting to delay the ship from leaving Sydney Harbour.

Since 1977, the major organisations, especially in Sydney and Melbourne, were infiltrated and taken over by more moderate people, who put their hope in the

election of a Labor Government to stop uranium mining. Putting all faith and energy in the political mechanics of Labor versus Liberal proved to be a fatal move for the Australian Anti-Nuclear Movement. Although political lobbying might be seen as sometimes necessary, the most vital role must be and is being played by ordinary people in their trade unions and on the streets, directly participating in the movement.

This year a number of people, unhappy with the moderate political stance of movement organisations, decided to revive the Ride Against Uranium. It is a direct political action in which we, the participants, educate ourselves about nuclear power in particular, and about each other. The many people we meet on route also learn about nuclear energy and other environmental and social concerns.

From the start the essential philosophy behind the ride has been anarchist pacifist. A pacifist approach has already proven effect-

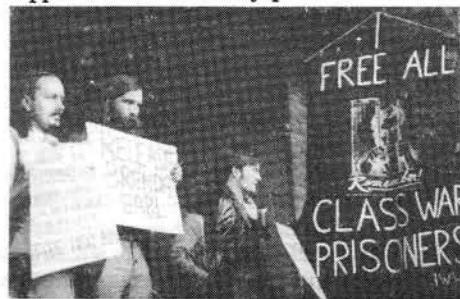


ive in confronting the police and workers who guard and maintain Australia's one nuclear reactor at Lucas Heights near Sydney. A number of resignations, and policy and information leaks have resulted due to persistent talking and arguing the issues. We must be getting results when the bureaucracies instruct their workers not to talk or fraternise with us.

When we arrived on Parliament House Lawns this year we established the ATOM FREE EMBASSY and endeavoured, in vain, to meet the appropriate Government Ministers. It took just two days for an instruction to be issued that the police officers on guard duty were not to talk to us. Meanwhile, we did a tour of the Embassies and conveyed our concern in the nuclear policies of the USA, GERMANY, JAPAN, FRANCE, BRITAIN, and the USSR. Several people who felt more dedicated have decided to establish the ATOM FREE EMBASSY on a permanent basis.

The ATOM FREE EMBASSY is currently receiving support from various people and groups in Canberra. But to maintain and protect itself from the Liberal Party (conservative) Government it urgently needs letters and postcards of support. Please send a postcard of support to:
The Atom Free Embassy
c/o Parliament House Lawns
Parliament House
Canberra 2600
Australia.

JOHN ENGLART



International action—Picket in Sydney for the release of Brenda Earl.

Revolted peasants at Bow Common Lane Commemorative Festival in East London.
(See Review)



LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS**Dangerous Data**

Editors,

Donald Roodum's review of H.B. Gibson's book on Hans Eysenck mentions that the psychologist considered that 'no data, however distasteful, should be suppressed'. It is a pity the inventors of the atom bomb and the scientists who forwarded the work concerned with this invention also held to this view. They assisted substantially in the State's cremation of many thousands of Japanese citizens at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Eysenck may not hold the same sort of responsibility, but if I were black I might feel rather differently. Perhaps if Donald Roodum were faced with supposedly accurate scientific data based on the defunct notions of Lombroso that anarchists were criminal due to the shape of their heads, resulting in murder squads setting out to clear the world of the 'menace' by depriving them, 'admitted anarchists', of their heads - then, but a bit late, Donald could see that distasteful data, always highly questionable, should not be propagated with such zest without a recognition of the unpleasant repercussions for people having little defence.

Detached academics who are far from the social setting where racial hatred can destroy lives, expectations and security, should not feel amazed - nor should their apologists - at having a certain hostility directed at them for having encouraged racial prejudice. The assertions about 'authoritarian socialists' may have some basis, but libertarians have also criticised Eysenck over race, astrology, publicity-seeking, etc.

J.W.

Scholarly Data?

Dear FREEDOM,

Donald Roodum's review of my book Hans Eysenck: The Man and his Work contains certain technical errors and misunderstandings which involve mis-statements of fact (FREEDOM 6th June, 1981). I would like to correct these.

The review states: 'Jensen concluded that the difference between average IQs in the black and white populations is a genetic difference.' I am afraid that this is incorrect. Such a conclusion may have been reached by Roodum on the basis of the data, but it has not been reached by Jensen. The statement which Jensen made in the article which

caused all the fuss was as follows:

'It seems not unreasonable, in view of the fact that intelligence variation has a large genetic component, to hypothesize that genetic factors may play a part in this picture. But such an hypothesis is anathema to many social scientists. The idea that the lower average intelligence and scholastic performance of Negroes could involve, not only environmental, but also genetic, factors has indeed been strongly denounced (e.g. Pettigrew, 1964). But it has been neither contradicted nor discredited by the evidence.'

(Harvard Educational Review, Winter 1969, p. 82)

Roodum goes on to state: 'As it happens, the 80% heritability data, used in good faith by Jensen and quoted in good faith by Eysenck, have since been shown to be fraudulent. They came from a paper (sic) by the brilliant scientific confidence trickster Sir Cyril Burt'. The idea that the heritability estimate was based on 'a paper' by any one researcher, is of course just nonsense. Insofar as Jensen was indebted to any one person, it was to the geneticist Lester King, and he wrote:

'I am grateful to the University of California geneticist Dr. Jack Lester King for making these calculations, which are based on the assumption that the heritability of IQ is .80, a value which is the average of all the major studies of the heritability of intelligence'. (Ibid. p. 36)

Roodum, in his patent naivety, seems to wish to be kind to Jensen and Eysenck, and to forgive them for some sort of sin. Poor lads, they were misled by that wicked old man Cyril Burt! This is quite funny. Writing of Eysenck he says: 'Eysenck is not a man to stand by his earlier statements when they are affected by new information. Later this year he will publish a study demonstrating an important flaw which refutes his earlier findings in support of astrology (nonsense!). When he gets round to it, he will no doubt publish a statement to the effect that Jensen's work on race and IQ, though formally correct, must now be dismissed as arguing from a false premise. It will be interesting to see how the authoritarian left responds to that'. The idea of Eysenck standing on his head and recanting is worth a chuckle. The fact is that Eysenck has published quite a lot since it was accepted that some of Burt's

later work can be discounted, and he has not changed his views about the heritability of intelligence one iota. Why should he? Let us consider precisely what Eysenck has written on the subject:

'What is important to consider is the degree to which the exclusion of Burt's data makes any difference to the conclusions which we may draw from the remaining evidence on the genetic contribution to phenotypic IQ differences. In this book we have looked at the evidence which remains, and find that the conclusions to be drawn are not materially affected by this exclusion of Burt's data.'

(H.J. Eysenck, The Structure and Measurement of Intelligence, 1979, p. 230)

The authoritarian left will have no need, as Roodum hopes, to adjust its attitudes. Eysenck will continue to be the man they love to hate!

Roodum pays me the compliment of stating that 'Fortunately it is a highly entertaining book, as well as being thoroughly scholarly'. I am sure that it cannot compete in entertainment value with his review, for anyone who knows anything about Eysenck and psychology! Scholarship is another matter.

Yours fraternally,
TONY GIBSON

Cambridge

Anti Nuclear Successes

'Complete failure of the anti-nuclear movement'? Tell that to the people of Portskewett, Near Chepstow, who campaigned successfully to stop the construction of a nuclear power station. Tell it to the people of Orkney who, for the time being at least, have stopped uranium prospecting there.

'Abject failure'? That doesn't describe the members of Madryn, a group in mid-Wales, who occupied Forestry Commission offices and turned geologists off the land where they eventually hope to test-drill to bury nuclear waste. Nor does it describe the people around Mullwarchar in Ayrshire, who are ready to take direct action when the drillers try to go ahead after the results of the public inquiry have been announced - already the would-be drillers have been blocked from taking a Portakabin up the mountain, and 'lost' their super-duper geological testing vehicle. It seems to have been drowned in one of the marshes.

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And what about the people in Cornwall - both those around Luxulyan who have already taken direct action against attempts to assess if a site there is suitable for a power station, and the people in the Cornish anti-nuclear Alliance, who are considering direct action at other potential sites?

There is every reason to be depressed about Torness. But that is one campaign, and the reasons we are losing there have less to do with people's hang-ups about cutting fences than with other factors - like the local opposition to the plant was belated; like that the Torness Alliance never gained the confidence of local people; and like the break-down of trust between groups from further afield in that alliance.

In looking at the victory at Plogoff in Brittany, the key factor was the solidarity of local people over the last five years. They not only confronted the riot police to harass a public inquiry and blocked roads to keep out equipment, but set up a land trust to take ownership of the site. There they now have a sheep farm, powered with a windmill. An autonomous house was due to be completed some time this summer. This continuous constructive activity has sustained the struggle in the lulls between large festivals and demonstrations and more militant actions. The constructive work is in itself a form of direct action, and no less important to the long-term success of a campaign than tactics of confrontation.

By ignoring what has been achieved, we run the risk that people will resign themselves to being powerless and that campaigns will restrict themselves to futile gestures - no matter how militant.

Love and strength,

Yorks HOWARD CLARK

Reply from D.M. :

While there is one Nuclear Power Station left operating, the anti-nuclear movement has failed, because it needs only one to ruin a large portion, if not all, of this country. It needs only one to supply enough material for nuclear weapons to finish off all of us. Okay, we've had our successes, but even now, Torness and Heysham are busily being built and others are coming off the drawing board. The point I was trying to make (and that seems to have been proved by the cases you quote) is that people when they get out and DO something can stop the nuclear menace. But when they just shout about it (as at Torness this year), they achieve very little.

No Pen Friends!

Dear Friends,

I am writing to you in connection with Doug Wakefield, who is doing life in the isolation unit at Long Lartin Prison, Evesham. (You kindly printed a letter of his which we forwarded to you after he was beaten up in November).

I have built up a strong friendship with Doug during the year that I have been corresponding with him, and had applied to visit him (even though this meant a visit from Lancaster C.I.D. to make sure I was not a revolutionary or anything).

I received a letter from the Governor at Long Lartin yesterday, which informed me that 'correspondence between yourself and Douglas Wakefield will no longer be allowed, and nor will you be permitted to visit him'. This is because 'Home Office instructions do not allow inmates to correspond with pen friends who have obtained their names from any form of advertisement for pen friends'. (I first wrote to Doug after reading his appeal for help in FREEDOM !)

Naturally, I am somewhat distressed at this abrupt termination of our relationship, although I think that Doug, in his 7' x 6' cell, will be even more upset. This will leave him with only 2 friends writing to him.

I would be pleased if you could give me any help or advice on how I could re-establish contact with Doug. If you could use a line in FREEDOM (which Doug reads) to let him know that Frances and I are trying to get in touch, I would be very grateful. Please help in any way you can.

Love
Lancaster. SIMON MARTIN

Victory for Carl

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Victory over the forces of evil! After two years of struggle over my illegal exile to the State of California and San Quentin prison the State of Washington is within the next couple of weeks taking me back to the State of Washington. Talk about the power of the people. Want to thank all of you out there in 'freedom' who gave me your support. They say my prison file has more protest letters in it than prison records, smile.

All is not good news though.... my wife Susan is being harassed by the forces of evil. She was working for some rich folks as a

governess and around where she worked there were a lot of break-ins happening so the police investigated all of the hired help in the area and found out she was my wife. Her bosses nutted up so she quit, but has another job so that is fine. Also she is on the board of directors with the United Families and Friends of Prisoners in Washington State. Her and another woman were turned away from a prison where U.F.F.P. had a program inside on the grounds that they were suspected members of the George Jackson Brigade! She has never been a member of the G.J.B. and neither have I so a game you see. They started this one back in 1976 on me and now they include her in it, but so far we have them surrounded.

Around my last letter on the Libertarian Alliance don't be disturbed by the way I signed off in it. Just messing with a few friends, smile. The whole point is I think we should stop calling everybody an enemy and start working on all of the unity we can get. We can't win over the forces of evil the way we are going. If what you are and are for is so fucking good let's hear about it in a positive and constructive manner. All that enemy talk and name calling communicates nothing positive and changes no one and nothing. Many people including people who work for the enemy read FREEDOM - we turn the former off and play into the hands of the latter's boss with the suit. Let's try to educate both, gain their support. Also the media here is playing up the riots there as race riots. I am disturbed by the lack of attention you in England are giving the riots. We need to know the truth so we can expose the lies so how about more news, analysis on the riots?

Again and in closing Right On! for your support around this exile and for me. Love you all and can't do doo-doo without you here. To get her we got the enemy surrounded!

Love and Rage,
CARL HARP

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FREEDOM CONTACTS

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Groups

BEDFORDSHIRE anarchist. Write: John, 81F, Bromham Road, Bedford, MK40 2AH.

BLACK DRAGON. Contact through Box No. 5, c/o Neges Bookshop, 31 Alexandra Rd, Swansea, SA1 5DQ, W. Glamorgan. Details for new meeting place yet to be finalised.

RIVER CALDER. 14 anarchists on isle in river with huts and tents. Contact: Miss Spodger Booper, 6 Susans Buildings, Muddbank Village, On Tenter Isle, River Calder (near the weir), Near Wakefield, West Yorkshire.

NOTTINGHAM: Mushroom, 10 Heathcote Street, phone 582506. Nottingham Anarchist Group, phone 708302. No address.

Meetings

ANARCHISM AND TERRORISM
Public meeting organised by the 121 Bookshop Collective. 7.30pm, Wed 1st July at the Bookshop, 121, Railton Rd, Brixton. There will be no superstars or guest speakers, and Aldo Moro, General Kitson, Carlos the Jackal and Stuart Christie will not be attending.

Literature

WHAT you've always wanted! A truly remarkable piece of anarchosarco literature. Highly recommended, say the editors! The South London Stress #4 out now from A Distribution, or 121 Railton Road, Herne Hill SE24, as well as Freedom Bookshop. Price 15p.

Help - Now!

BELFAST ANARCHIST COLLECTIVE urgently need to find at least £2000 to settle bookshop debts. They plan various events in and around Belfast as benefits, but support is urgently needed from all other anarchist groups elsewhere. Please do what you can to help in terms of benefits and personal and group donations.

Send to: BAC, Just Books, Wine-tavern Street, Belfast.
Write if you need further information or advice. Help them NOW to keep alive a very necessary part of their presence in Belfast.

Events

THE YOUNG ANARCHISTS. Based on the memoirs of Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman. Presented by the Artaud Company and Cafe Theatre, at the Bear & Staff, Charing Cross Rd., London WC2. Every Mon & Wed & Fri. 9.15pm. £1.50. Ring 240 0794 for further details.

GRAND ANARCHIST SEASIDE TRIP. Outing organised by the 121 Bookshop Collective, for Sunday 5th July to the Dorset Coast (sand, sea, pubs, fun). Cost: £4 (£3 for kids), to be paid in advance by June 27th at the Bookshop. We need at least 45 people to break even. Further details by ringing Terry on 947 7056 (evenings).

Desires

121 Bookshop hereby formally do challenge the Autonomy Centre to a contest of footballing in order to prove who is the most bestest anarchist mob around and it will be held upon the occasion of the Grand Anarchist Festival entitled What Wedding to be held in London on 29 July this year and we're going to win.

WOLVERHAMPTON anarchists have just established an anarchist centre in their fair community. They are looking for any help with information, literature, gigs, books, etc., to get the whole thing really moving. Contact: Robin Bartlett, 618 Stafford Road, Fordhouses, Wolverhampton, WV10 6NN.

THOSE wishing to contact 'Isolated anarchist in Arizona', please write to Box Z, Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1, and letters will be forwarded.

UHURU COLLECTIVE in Oxford needs radical people to help set up resources centre and run community cafe and wholefood shop. Hard work, low pay, but lots of room for energy and ideas.

Contact: 35 Cowley Road, Oxford. Tel: 48249.

ARE there any anarchists in Winchester? If so, please contact: Zoe, Flat 2 Springhill, Cheriton Road, Winchester. (An isolated anarchist in a haven of young conservatives!).

CHOKE?

continued from page 2

guilty of some dishonesty - unless you are doing it completely unknowingly. The great issue in speciesism is the human crime of cannibalism - practiced by hardly any other creature. Humans live on their own kind with a ferocity, cruelty and sophistication practiced by no wild animal on its fellows - whether they are solitary creatures or gregarious. Even a robin will tolerate a robin next door - as long as he stays next door.

Remember Swift's little verse - 'So, naturalists observe, a flea Hath smaller fleas that on him prey;

And these have smaller fleas to bite 'em,

And so proceed, ad infinitum.'

One phrase of yours, I find significant: 'animal liberation ensures that we don't choke on assumed superiority.'

Well, really, if ever there was a concentration of assumed superiority, it was packed into that ALF Review, which reeked of elitist paternalism. It was an appeal for humans to show their links with animals by behaving like no other species!

By all means let us fight against mindless cruelty; atavistic hunting for sport; exploitation for vanity; the careless keeping of pets; unnecessary experiments; the savage exploitation for profit in the factory farm and the degradation of magnificent animals in circuses - but remember that homo sapiens is part of the animal kingdom too, not outside it.

As a predator, as many of the 'great' beasts are, homo sap has its place in ecology and the balance of nature and more and more of us are becoming conscious of it. If many have lost their way, you may be making it all much more difficult to find again if you go on demanding just that moral superiority which, being assumed, will choke us all.

PHILIP SANSON

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THE PEOPLES UPRISING





IT IS 600 years since the first serious attempt at a social revolution in this country. The episode of 1381 is generally called the Peasants' Revolt, which is a misleading name, since it involved more than peasants and it became more than a revolt. It was in fact a people's rising, and it is worth remembering as the earliest one known in Britain -- and also as the earliest known appearance here of some of the basic ideas of anarchism.

Many studies have been written of the 1381 rising, but few recently, and most of them under Marxist influence. It is easy enough to suggest various causes of the rising, but not so easy to see why they had the effect they did exactly where and when they did. The possible factors may be listed as follows.

As in most revolutionary situations, there was a weak and unsuccessful government. Richard II became king at the age of ten in 1377, and was at the mercy of rival groups of barons, dominated by his uncle John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, who were themselves at the mercy of Parliament, dominated by the growing wealth of the Commons, based on the expanding middle class.

There was also a long and unsuccessful war with France. This had begun in 1337 and had brought a series of remarkable victories until 1360, but from 1369 there was a series of disasters. The English government proved too weak either to repeat the former victories or to accept an honourable peace, and impoverished the country with useless fighting.

Meanwhile the Black Death had taken its toll. This was a world-wide epidemic of bubonic and pneumonic plague, which originated in central Asia, spread into China and India in 1346, and reached Europe in 1347. England was ravaged in 1348-1350, and it is estimated that about one-third of the total population of about four million died. (The present population is about ten times as large. A fair comparison is the Irish famine of the 1840s, when about one-twelfth of the total population of about eight million died; another one-fifth of the population emigrated, so the final effect was about the same.)

The immediate effect of the Black Death was drastic depopulation, but the later effect was a rise in the cost of labour without a corresponding rise in the cost of food. This increase in the economic strength of the working classes was suppressed by the political strength of the ruling classes, and the law was used not just against unions and strikes but against any improvement in wages or conditions of work.

Similar developments affected most of Europe, and there were several serious risings on the Continent during the late fourteenth century. Places as different as the Kingdom of Naples and the County of Flanders were continually subject to riots and rebellions. There were the outbursts of the Jacquerie in France in 1358 and of the Ciompi in Florence in 1378, when the fury and violence on both sides reached extremes never approached in England.

A less tangible factor is the intellectual and cultural climate of the age. England had been conquered by the Norman-French in the eleventh century and subdued by the tyranny of alien government, law, language and literature. But by the fourteenth century the native English identity was reappearing in such people as Geoffrey Chaucer the poet and John Wyclif the theologian -- the first

real English poet and the first real translator of the Bible into English. There were also such lesser writers as John Gower and William Langland -- indeed some of the sayings quoted by the chronicles of the rising of 1381 sound almost like quotations from Langland's great poem *Piers Ploughman*, of which the first two versions were written during the 1360s and 1370s. None of these people had anything to do with the rising, but they reflect the same sense of national and popular independence and the same new feeling of individual judgement and freedom.

It is tempting but misleading to impose a class interpretation on the rising. In fact it is clear from the contemporary documents and chronicles that all classes were involved -- not just the villeins or serfs, who were tied to their land and their lord, and the landless labourers, who had less security but more liberty, because they could demand higher wages or travel for better work, but also the artisans or skilled labourers, who were free from the traditions and obligations of the feudal system and who were to provide most of the leaders of the rising, and the ordinary people in the towns, who resented the growing wealth and power of the merchants and manufacturers, and even some of the lesser landowners, who resented the continuing wealth of the aristocracy and the Church. There were different combinations of people active in different places, but in general the rising was a broad people's movement rather than a mere peasants' revolt or class rebellion.

THE RISING BEGINS

Indeed the immediate cause, affecting everyone, was taxation. In November 1380 Parliament was summoned to Northampton -- the government being afraid of the London populace -- to raise more money for the French war. The Chancellor (i.e. prime minister) was Simon Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury; the Treasurer (i.e. finance minister) was Thomas Brantingham, Bishop of Exeter: they were honest but incompetent men who could only think of imposing taxes, rather than ending the war. There had already been special demands above ordinary taxes in 1377 and 1379, which had been met by a poll tax of 4d (about one day's pay for a skilled labourer) on every adult person in the country (excluding beggars, but including women). On 6 December 1380 the Commons agreed to yet another poll tax, rather than taxes on trade or property, in order to spread the burden as widely as possible. But it was three times larger than before, the basic rate being 1s, and the range being from 4d for the poorest man or woman over fifteen to 1l for the wealthy, and each community being responsible to tax commissioners for sharing the burden fairly and raising a total of 1s per head of the whole adult population.

Brantingham was replaced as Treasurer by Sir Robert Hales, Prior of the Knights Hospitallers (one of the semi-charitable semi-conspiratorial lay organisations of medieval Europe), who supervised the collection of the new tax during January and February 1381. At once it became clear that there had been universal evasion, by the simple means of families denying the existence of dependents who had been covered by the earlier collections, so that it looked as if the population had fallen in a few years from 1,400,000 adults to less than 900,000. In March 1381 the government sent out fresh commissioners to extract the balance, and during April and May the agents of authority argued with the representatives of the communities all over southern England, until in the end the storm broke.

The rising seems to have begun on 30 May, when a tax commissioner called Thomas Bampton visited Brentford in Essex and ran into trouble with people from the little villages of Fobbing, Corringham and Stanford, ten miles south-east on the Thames estuary (now the site of a huge oil complex!). When they refused to pay any more tax, Bampton tried to arrest their leader Thomas Baker of Fobbing, but they drove him out of the town. When the government sent the chief justice, Robert Belknap, to punish the offenders, they drove him out as well and also killed some of his assistants on 2 June.

Meanwhile more serious troubles had begun across the Thames in Kent, rebels attacking the monastery at Lesness on 2 June, making contact with the men of Essex, and attacking Dartford on 5 June. When the government sent another judge to punish the offenders,

he too was driven back to London. On 6 June Robert Cave, a Dartford baker, led the rebels in a successful attack on Rochester Castle, and on 7 June they captured Maidstone.

Here the leadership of the rebels was taken by Walter Tyler. A later story describes him as an artisan from Dartford, but it seems more likely that he was from Essex, and it is also likely that he had been a soldier in France. His known career lasted barely a week, and nothing is known about his ideas, but he certainly held his followers together while he lived. The rebels moved from Maidstone to Canterbury, which was captured on 10 June. Few people were killed, but great houses were sacked, official papers were destroyed, prisons were opened. Rebels interrupted a service in the cathedral, but didn't damage anything. The now large rebel army immediately left for London, passing through Maidstone on 11 June.

Here the rebels were joined by John Ball, a wandering priest known in both Essex and Kent, who had been imprisoned by Sudbury for unorthodox preaching and was released from Maidstone prison by the rebels. He became the main ideological influence on the people during the short time available, but it is impossible to know what influence he may have exerted during the twenty years he was said to have active before 1381. Ball preached the social gospel, the liberty and equality of men and women, rich and poor, and the establishment of the earthly paradise by mass revolution. He may have been responsible for the strange letters quoted by the chroniclers, which seem to be in a combination of poetry and code, and he was responsible for sermons to the rebels, which gave them a justification for their actions and which seem to be the first open expression in this country of the basic ideas of radicalism, socialism, and indeed anarchism.

THE REBELS IN LONDON

On 12 June the men of Kent reached Blackheath, then a few miles south-east of London. Meanwhile the men of Essex had captured Colchester and then moved towards London, their main leader being a Londoner called Thomas Farringdon. On 12 June they had reached Mile End, then a few miles east of London. The government took refuge in the Tower of London, and the Mayor of London, William Walworth, prepared to defend the city without military help.

On 13 June John Ball preached a sermon to the people on Blackheath, and the young king tried to speak to them from a barge on the Thames. The rebels marched on London, and bridges and gates were opened by aldermen who were more sympathetic to them than to the government. They had already destroyed Lambeth Palace and opened Marshalsea prison, and now they reached the climax of violence. On 13 June they burnt the Savoy, the mansion of John of Gaunt and the finest private house in the country, and then the Temple and St John's Priory in Clerkenwell, the headquarters of the lawyers and the Knights Hospitalers. They also opened the Fleet and Newgate prisons.

That night the rebel leaders conferred at the house of Farringdon and the government leaders conferred in the Tower. It is not known what happened at the former, but at the latter the Earl of Salisbury won the argument for a moderate policy of negotiation rather than an extreme policy of confrontation. On 14 June the king met the rebels at Mile End and granted Tyler all the concessions he demanded -- the abolition of serfdom, of feudal dues, of monopolies, of all restrictions on work and trade -- and dozens of clerks began writing charters to such effect.

Meanwhile Tyler led some of the rebels into London, where they entered the Tower, capturing Sudbury and Hales, who were immediately beheaded, along with a few other victims -- including John Legge, who was said to have recommended the second tax commission. More great houses were destroyed, including Highbury Manor, and the London population seems to have begun to turn against the rebels. This may have persuaded the government to persist with its policy, when it must have been tempted to abandon London and seek help from John of Gaunt who was fighting in Scotland or from Thomas of Woodstock who was doing the same in Wales.

On 15 June the king met the rebels again at Smithfield, then just north of London. During his discussion with Tyler, who demanded more concessions, a quarrel began (or was deliberately begun), and when Tyler drew a dagger Walworth cut him down. Richard prevented a massacre by leading the rebels north into Clerkenwell, while Walworth returned to London to raise support -- beheading the wounded Tyler at St Bartholomew's Hospital on the way. Without their

"When Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then a Gentleman?"

"Ah, ye good people, the matters goeth not well to pass in England, nor shall do till everything be common, and that there be no villains nor gentlemen, but that we may be all united together, and that the lords be no greater masters than we be. What have we deserved, or why should we be kept thus in servage? We be all come from one father and one mother, Adam and Eve: whereby can they say or shew that they be greater lords than we be, saving by that they cause us to win and labour for that they dispense?..."

John Ball's sermon, according to Froissart, translated by Lord Berners (1523-1525).

"He tried to prove by the words of the proverb that he had taken for his text, that from the beginning all men were created equal by nature, and that servitude had been introduced by the unjust and evil oppression of men, against the will of God, who, if it had pleased him to create serfs, surely in the beginning of the world would have appointed who should be a serf and who a lord. Let them consider, therefore, that he had now appointed the time wherein, laying aside the yoke of long servitude, they might if they wished enjoy their liberty so long desired...."

John Ball's sermon, according to Walsingham, translated by R. B. Dobson (1970).



leader, the rebels were dispersed, the men of Essex and Hertfordshire scattering and the men of Kent marching south through London and then scattering as well. Thus a fourteen-year-old king and the Mayor of London almost single-handedly disposed of a rebel army estimated at ten or fifteen thousand armed men.

THE RISING ENDS

During these dramatic events in the capital, the rising had spread away from London as well as towards it. There were some disturbances in all the Home Counties, and troubles were recorded as far as 150 miles away to the north and west, but there was never a general rising covering more than a county at a time. There were risings connected with local disputes in such places as St Albans, Winchester, Bridgwater, Worcester, Chester, York, Scarborough and Beverley at various times that summer. Rumours of approaching rebels led to the mobilisation of Leicester for two days on 17-18 June.

But there were more serious outbursts, especially in East Anglia. Rebels captured Peterborough on 17 June, Cambridge on 15 June, Bury St Edmunds on 13 June, Norwich on 17 June, Yarmouth on 18 June. John Wraw in Suffolk and Geoffrey Lister and Roger Bacon in Norfolk led disciplined armies for a week or two, and Lister was trying to establish a permanent basis for his position in Norwich rather than just boast and fight. However, Henry Despenser, Bishop of Norwich, suppressed the rebels of East Anglia without delay or difficulty, and the rising was over by the end of July 1381.

Just as the rebels had been remarkably merciful when they were victorious, so was the government when they were defeated. A few rebels were killed in the battles to recover the towns they had captured, or in the last stand of the men of Essex at Billericay on 28 June, and a few of their leaders were put to death immediately afterwards. Only a few hundred people were sentenced to death in the later trials, and many of them were reprieved and even subsequently released, including several known to have been personally guilty of murder. None of those killed seem to have been tortured beyond the standard horror of being hanged, drawn (i.e. disembowelled while still alive) and quartered (i.e. hacked to pieces), just as none of the rebels' victims seem to have been tortured. The only really unpleasant feature of the whole episode was the widespread attacks on foreigners, especially Flemings, who were murdered in several places for no other reason than their origin.

All the concessions made to the rebels in London and in the various other centres were of course withdrawn as soon as they were defeated. When the men of Essex tried to retain something of what they had won, their representatives were rebuffed by Richard himself at Waltham: "Villeins ye are, and villeins ye shall remain!" At Chelmsford he issued a proclamation revoking all the charters granted at Mile End; the new Chief Justice, Robert Tresilian, and other senior judges tried arrested rebels for a couple of months; the next Parliament, which met at Westminster from November 1381 to February 1382, confirmed the status quo but also recommended a general amnesty, which was granted.

"...Forsooth, Brothers, fellowship is heaven, and lack of fellowship is hell: fellowship is life, and lack of fellowship is death: and the deeds that ye do upon the earth, it is for fellowship's sake that ye do them; and the life that is in it, that shall live on and on for ever, and each one of you part of it, while many a man's life upon the earth from the earth shall wane. Therefore, I bid you not dwell in hell but in heaven, or while ye must, upon earth, which is a part of heaven, and forsooth, no foul part...."

A Dream of John Ball by William Morris (1888).

"John Ball, Saint Mary priest, greets well all manner men, and bids them in the name of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, stand manly together in truth and truth shall help you.

"Now reigneth pride in price,
And covetise is held wise,
And lechery withouten shame,
And gluttony withouten blame.
Envy reigneth with treason,
And sloth is taken in great season.

"God do boot, for now is time."

John Ball's letter, according to Knighton, quoted in the original English.

"I'll would change be at whiles, were it not for the change beyond the change."

A Dream of John Ball by William Morris (1888).

"...I pondered all these things, and how men fight and lose the battle, and the thing that they fought for comes about in spite of their defeat, and when it comes turns out not to be what they meant, and other men have to fight for what they meant under another name...."

A Dream of John Ball by William Morris (1888).

CAUSES AND EFFECTS

The people's rising of 1381 seems almost to have had no cause and no effect. There is no evidence that it was planned before it began or even while it was going on. There are a few references in contemporary records to rebels claiming to belong to a "Magna Societas", but this seems to mean a "big company" of rebels rather than a "great society" of revolutionaries. There may have been an organisation behind the various individuals and groups, but there is no way of knowing now. Similarly, there is no evidence that any kind of organisation survived the suppression, and the few serious riots

WAT TYLER SLAIN AT SMITHFIELD



during the next few decades seem to have been just as spontaneous as the rising itself.

Nor is there any evidence that permanent social or political changes resulted from the events of 1381. The government stumbled on from error to error, until Richard was deposed by his cousin Henry Bolingbroke, the son of John of Gaunt, in 1399. It fought wars and collected taxes as before. Serfdom was not abolished, labour was not emancipated, wages were not kept up and prices were not kept down, land was not shared out and taxes were not made fair. Despite all the efforts of first liberal and then socialist historians, the people's rising has not been shown to have affected the operation of the feudal system at all.

"...What else shall ye lack when ye lack masters? Ye shall not lack for the fields ye have tilled, nor the houses ye have built, nor the cloth ye have woven; all these shall be yours, and what so ye will of all that the earth beareth; then shall no man mow the deep grass for another, while his own kine lack cowmeat; and he that soweth shall reap, and the reaper shall eat in fellowship the harvest that in fellowship he hath won; and he that buildeth a house shall dwell in it with those that he biddeth of his free will; and the tithe barn shall garner the wheat for all men to eat of when the seasons are untoward, and the raindrift hideth the sheaves in August; and all shall be without money and without price. Faithfully and merrily then shall all men keep the holidays of the Church in peace of body and joy of heart. And man shall help man, and the saints in heaven shall be glad, because men no more fear each other; and the churl shall be ashamed, and shall hide his churlishness till it be gone, and he be no more a churl: and fellowship shall be established in heaven and on the earth."

A Dream of John Ball by William Morris (1888).

The one genuine effect of the rising was that in the minds of the people. It was never repeated in quite the same way, though there were major risings in 1450 and 1549 and successful revolutions in 1649 and 1688; but it was never forgotten. Both rebels and rulers always remembered the time when a people's army captured London, killed the chief ministers, and claimed liberty and equality. Even after later rebels defeated and either expelled or executed a king, the earlier rebels were still honoured. At the time of the French Revolution, the English writer Robert Southey produced a play about Wat Tyler; and at the time of the socialist movement, the English writer William Morris produced a story about John Ball.



Today, 600 years later, various sections of the political left and the trade union movement have commemorated 1381 in various ways, most of them reminding us of William Morris's remark that "men fight and lose the battle, and the thing that they fought for comes about in spite of their defeat, and when it comes turns out not to be what they meant, and other men have to fight for what they meant under another name". It is of course tragic that the rebels were defeated, but it would have been just as tragic if they had won and had made themselves rulers, as the victors of 1649 did. What they fought for did come about in spite of their defeat, but others have had to fight for what was still needed. And we still have to fight for liberty and equality under various names, while the leftwing parties and the trade unions forget what they once fought for. Feudalism died, and capitalism is dying, but collectivism is still living, and anarchism is still struggling to be born. Here, if anywhere, is the lesson of 1381 for 1981.

N W

The illustrations appearing on pages 9 & 13 were designed and painted by Ray Walker and Mick Jones and can be seen in Bow Common Lane, London, E3. The illustration on page 9 is by Burne-Jones and the remainder on pages 10, 12 and 13 are from a C.P. pamphlet by A.L. Morton.



H-Blocks of Long Kesh Northern Ireland

DURING a visit to Northern Ireland last month, by members of the FREEDOM collective, it was evident that the campaign to mobilise support for prisoners in the H Blocks of Long Kesh was at high pitch and gaining much popular support. Media lies and distortions, hand in glove with government policies, do little to inform people as to the realities of the horrors and degradations suffered by many prisoners. The FREEDOM Collective members who visited Ireland are, at present, compiling a special Review section which will appear in the next issue. By way of introduction, and to clear misconceptions and downright mis-information, one of the members now gives some cold facts about one facet of state repression in Northern Ireland.

THE problem of prisoners is the problem of peace in the north of Ireland. At present there are over 2000 republican prisoners and about 800 loyalist ones. As with prisoners world-wide, the problem does not end with them alone. It takes in relatives, friends, neighbours. The present problem, therefore includes many thousands of people who come from areas that, to a great extent, are underprivileged and poor. Any injustice within the prison systems has countless effects outside. There can be no peace when a Government is not scrupulous in matters of justice. For many years, the British state has systematically tried to hide her violations of human rights in Northern Ireland. Not a single member of the British Army, the RUC, the local police, or any other repressive force have lost any liberty or the right to continue their practices after charges of murder and cruel ill treatment were laid at their doors, the latter charges being upheld at the European Court of Human Rights and Amnesty International. It is difficult to envisage how peace can be achieved whilst such suspicion of the processes of law exists and whilst reaction and confrontation have such direful consequences for the whole community. Thousands of members of the catholic community have been imprisoned without trial and hundreds tortured in the infamous centres of Holywood, Castlereagh, Ballykelly, Ballykinlar and Girdwood.

The rise in the number of prisoners in Northern Ireland is due to 'crimes' that are politically motivated. People are sentenced by special courts after enduring special interrogation techniques under detention by emergency special laws and sentenced to special long sentences. Yet the claim for special category status is denied them.

Prison conditions have always been bad in Long Kesh, a camp of concrete, iron, barbed wire, soldiers, dogs, hundreds of prison officers, men in cages. After a refusal to accept the new British arrangements - a velvet glove of promises of improvements, hiding the steel fist of removal of political status which was won by hunger strike in 1972 - the blanket protest began and the state tried to smash this protest as soon as possible. Excessive punishments resulted: no physical exercise, no reading or writing material, prisoners locked naked in their cells for 24 hours. When they realised that the authorities were tampering with letters, interfering with visits, continuing to beat up prisoners (especially young ones) they completed the cycle of deprivation and refused to wash and slop out. The prisoners suffering inhuman conditions, with only a blanket to reach out and touch, are there all day, all night, all week, some of them for years.

If the British government refuses to make any move from its intransigence and does not concede the demands of the prisoners on hunger strike at this very moment, then they will confirm that their attitude towards the H. Blocks and Armagh is part of an over-all attitude towards the catholic community, i.e. to deny them their rights and to keep them in a position of subservience which is part of the *raison d'être* of Northern Ireland.

It is clear, from our visit, that those who have recently died on hunger strike are honoured by their communities. It is unlikely that anyone will allow those deaths to have been in

vain. Similarly, many other prisoners are ready to continue the hunger strike action until such time as progress is seen to be made politically. Calls have come from many people active in resistance both at community and national level, to boycott British papers - partly to hit back economically and partly to protest at the generally hostile and distorted coverage of the hunger strike to date. This action, together with not patronising British firms and where possible not buying other British consumer goods, is fast gaining popular support. Support from both republican and loyalist areas, where common concern for human rights and anger at recent deaths in face of state intransigence unites a people in the midst of bitter sectarian conflict.

We are all familiar with the face of Bobby Sands from countless news reports which led up to his death. What perhaps is not so familiar is the graphic way in which he wrote of his experiences in the H-Blocks. The following, published in 1979, makes harrowing reading. I offer it as example because it is a first-hand account, and because it describes, better than any official report could, the reality of the suffering that the state subjects daily, in our name, on Northern Ireland; that colony deliberately created to be kept secure for the Crown.

'To pass the time and to keep warm I pace the floor. Sometimes I stand gazing out of the cell window at the grey barbed wire or simply just sit upon my dirty damp mattress on the floor in the corner of my dungeon-like tomb. But all the while I'm thinking of something, somebody or some place. It may be deep, serious thought or daydreaming to escape the reality of my nightmarish situation.'

'... Each day my comrades and I face a psychological battle for survival. It is a very intense struggle and the enemy is unmerciful.'

'For someone who is contented or unconcerned with any great worry, living what is termed an everyday life, you may find my psychological circumstances hard to comprehend.'

'... Imagine how it would feel to be locked up naked in solitary confinement, twenty four hours a day and subjected to total deprivation of not only common, everyday things, but of basic human necessities such as clothes, fresh air and exercise, the company of other human beings.'

'In short, imagine being entombed, naked and alone for a whole day.'

'What would it be like for twenty-seven torturous months ?'

'... Try and imagine just what it is like to be in this situation in surroundings that resemble a pig-sty and you are crouched naked upon the floor in a corner, freezing cold, amid the lingering stench of putrifying rubbish, crawling, wriggling white maggots all around you. Fat, bloating flies pestering your naked body, the silence is nerve-wrecking, your mind is in turmoil.'



'You are sitting waiting on the screws coming to your cell to drag you out to be forcibly bathed. You have heard and seen the horrible results of this from many of your comrades at Mass. You know only too well what it means. The skin scrubbed from your body with heavy brushes.'

'The screws have told you that you are next. You wait all day, just thinking. Your mind is wrecked. Maybe they've forgotten, you kid yourself; but you know they never forget.'

'They don't come. The next day is the same and the next and the next.'

'You become more and more depressed. For days your thoughts have been the same, a mass of fear, fearing what lies ahead. Consider being in that frame of mind every day! Knowing in your mind that you are to be beaten nearly senseless, forcibly bathed or held down to have your back passage examined and probed. These things are common facts of everyday H-Block life.'

'It is inconceivable to try to imagine what an eighteen year old naked lad goes through when a dozen or so screws literally slaughter him with batons, boots and punches while dragging him by the hair along a corridor or when they squeeze his privates until he collapses, or throw scalding water around his naked body.'

'It is also inconceivable for me to describe, let alone for you to imagine, our state of mind just sitting waiting for this to happen. I can say that this physical and psychological torture in the H Blocks has brought many men to the verge of insanity.'

'We are in a very bad state now.'

'What will we be like at the end of the day or in the years to come?'

'My mind is scarred deep. It is as equally a worrying thought that we may end up unable to even think at all.'

'With that in 'your' mind I will leave off. Think about it, but don't just leave it at that.'

Martin Hurson, from Cappagh, Co. Tyrone, began his hunger strike on May 29th this year. He is 26 years old and is the second youngest in a family of two brothers and six sisters. His mother is dead. He was arrested after a dawn raid by the British Army on 11th November 1976, and taken to Omagh RUC Barracks. In a complaint he later made he said that he was 'Beat about the head with clenched fists and with the open hand. I was hit in the privates... punched in the stomach... and my arms were twisted at this stage. My ears and hair were pulled... my legs kicked apart when I was standing against the wall.' As a result of these beatings he signed self-incriminating statements. The beatings were at the hands of the same RUC detectives presently suspended for assaulting James Joseph Rafferty, also from Cappagh.

After more interrogations and an appearance at a special court in Omagh he was convicted, with Judge Rowlands declaring that the statement taken in Omagh was admissible.

In November 77 he began the blanket protest, but appealed against conviction. In 1979 he was granted a retrial by the Appeal Court. Judge Murray ruled the Omagh statement inadmissible, but then went on to accept a statement made in Cookstown Barracks after further interrogations. He was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. He appealed against this conviction, but it was disallowed in June 1980.

Martin Hurson took part in the first hunger strike last December for 5 days, and is presently in H5.



Dr Seamus McAteer has written to the press:

'It is consequently not surprising that with this shady past, the official medical unions just do not want to know about the Government's treatment of the inmates of H Block, and other prisons in Northern Ireland.'

'I find it very sad to consider that it's now a matter for public concern how doctors have turned their backs on the locked up patients and have rejected their responsibilities to them. Here surely was a chance for the doctors to regain some of their lost prestige. They could have examined the terrifying conditions under which their patients live.'

'They could have used their medical expertise to shout the atrocious conditions from the house tops.'

'The silence of the medical bodies in Ireland is deafening.'

'The men in H Block are living like vermin, and the girls in Armagh are being treated like vermin; all due to the stupid intransigence of foolish men in power.'

'There is no doubt now but the British are worried.'

'Their propaganda has rebounded on them, and world reaction is mounting to the understanding that the Government is guilty of a sin against humanity as grave, if that were possible, as that of the bomber.'

We have seen that conditions of imprisonment and interrogation have united people in Northern Ireland (in a way many thought impossible) against a common enemy - the many covert and insidious ways of the State. How long will it be before Thatcher and her kind find in Britain a growing united resistance to their murderous policies?

Our forthcoming Review on Ireland, will, we hope, provoke strong and united reaction. The questions raised demand and deserve an immediate priority. By all means think hard and even write in with your news and comment. But, as Bobby Sands said: 'Don't just leave it at that.'

Ann

The perennial problem

EARLY in May, 10,000 people went to Westminster to press for aid to Third World countries. It is well to remember that this perennial problem of humanity is as yet unsolved. It is now not a problem that is without solution, although the problem is now political not practical.

15 to 20 million of our fellow human beings die from hunger and malnutrition each year. In certain areas, notably Africa, food production has lagged behind population. This has been made worse by local wars energized by the great powers and the disruption caused in the cultivation programmes by droughts in

Africa and floods in SE Asia.

China is not without its age-old problems either.

For the poorest countries, the cost of transport is added to the rising cost of grain which often exceeds the value of the cargo in the hold.

While people in the West are at the moment worried about unemployment and the recession, and the politically aware about the constant threat that nuclear arms poses, these problems are insignificant beside the imminent starvation of millions of people.

Many of these problems are a direct consequence of colonialism in which so-called independent countries have neglected their agriculture in the mistaken belief that Western industrialisation would bring wealth and power - it does bring power but poverty to the people.

Yet these problems together with our own of unemployment and nuclear proliferation could be solved to-day. The problems are in our acquiescence to a political and economic power structure that is an offence against human solidarity, which allows decay and degradation in our own land and mass starvation abroad.

State control is no answer; the central control of agriculture in Russia has never been a great success and its failure contributes in no small measure to the pressure on world grain supplies, adding to the difficulties of poorer countries in securing food in a capitalist world.

Meanwhile, food production is tied to profit and local over-production regarded as a disaster instead of an insurance against hard times. The problem could be solved to-day if use of agricultural production for industrial purposes was restricted. Then the reintroduction of people-based agriculture and the removal of natural resources like land from private ownership to community controls.

What the poorer countries require is a breathing space so that self-sufficiency and a re-establishment of natural resources can be achieved. Modern technical knowledge could reverse much of the so-called natural disasters of flood and drought

which are often caused by mis-management of natural resources.

Overcome the problem of power, profit and war and we can end hunger while it is not yet too late. Hunger is still the biggest indictment of the social system and an affront to human solidarity and dignity. 600 years ago the peasants revolted in this country against the growing centralised urbanised state that sucked all into its vortex. The peasants have always been grounded in reality; we still live on a rich island which still could produce a small surplus with cutting of waste and re-organising of agriculture, and contribute to solving the perennial Problem at last soluble but without the will to solve it.

The problem of the Third World is our own problem the Emperors represented by the multinationals who have gained control of resources. Increasing the fuel prices and restricting seeds to specific variety and hybrid by government edict. For example, the price of cauliflower seed is now £500 per pound. These seeds require heavy chemical fertilising produced by the same companies. The peasants in the Third World are not able to save many of these hybrid seeds.

Prior to this, self-sufficient agriculture was decimated in favour of cash industrial crops for which they were grossly underpaid.

So the problem of starvation is also one of dealing with these new lords of creation, they being now faceless and spread like a cancer throughout the world.

ALAN ALBON

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BOOK OF THE WEEK

Sidney Lens: Unrepentant Radical. An American Activist's Account of Five Turbulent Decades. 1930 - 1980. (438pp. cloth) £11.50 (87p)

Society of the Spectacle

In all societies where modern conditions of production prevail, the real is inverted in ideology, sold as a commodity, and represented as a spectacle. The critical concept of spectacle concerns an idea which mirrors itself in every other idea. This is exactly what a dialectical book should be. Guy Debord's Society of the Spectacle disdains to conceal its a priori purpose, nor does it attempt to reach its conclusions by means of academic questioning. It was written merely to show the terrain on which operates the coherent concrete use of a thesis which existed right from the start and which sprang from investigations into what effect a revolutionary critique of modern capitalism could have. Thus it is fundamentally a book from which nothing is missing except one or many revolutions. For which it couldn't wait.

Guy Debord's Society of the Spectacle is available from Box BM Mattock, London WC1N 3xx at £1.00 for passive consumers but free if you can think of a practical use for it. Also available from Freedom Bookshop.

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Many Thanks to all